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ABSTRACT

This document is a chapter in "The Principles and Practice of Educational Management," which aims to provide a systematic and analytical introduction to the study of educational management. The structure of the book reflects the main substantive areas of educational leadership and management, and most of the major themes are covered in the volume's 19 chapters, of which this is one. This chapter offers a set of models that administrators can use to analyze education governance and consider the possible impact of proposed changes across various cultures. One of the problems in looking at governance in different cultures is the temptation toward a "false universalism," in which researchers find commonalities where none exists. Studies of educational management too often neglect the framework of governance within which school leaders operate. If governance is defined as a system operating with certain tensions, such as integration versus fragmentation, then it can be considered as an overarching concept so as to establish a framework within which other common concepts related to structure and process can be located. The various types of models used here to understand the various contexts are the competitive market, school empowerment, local empowerment, and school quality. School autonomy, accountability, and school leadership can be understood better if they are considered under each of these models. Since structures of governance vary widely among different national contexts, and many of these structures are also in flux, practitioners need to analyze their own contemporary settings closely and take this analysis into account in developing their approach to the management of external relations. (Contains 44 references.) (RJM)

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Ron Glatter

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Governance, Autonomy and Accountability in Education

Ron Glatter

Introduction: a hazardous enterprise

To write about concepts such as those in the title for an international audience is a hazardous enterprise. It is easy to become over-impressed by apparent similarities between 'reforms' in various countries and to neglect continuing deep differences at the level of implementation and practice. For example, Levin (1999; 2000) has conducted research into education reform in national contexts which, in global terms, might seem very similar to one another – Canada, England, New Zealand and the USA. Yet he concludes that even across contexts with such close cultural affinities, reforms such as changes in governance exhibit considerable variation: 'The official commitment to decentralisation and parent involvement is ubiqitous, but within this frame policies and practices are highly variable' (Levin, 1999: 136). This observation is likely to have even greater force where the national contexts being compared are more diverse.

In this connection it is important to distinguish different dimensions of change. Green (1999) conducted an analysis of changing education and training systems in a group of distinctive European and East Asian settings. He found that, as a result of the impact of common global forces, there was clear evidence of convergence around broad policy themes, such as lifelong learning, decentralisation of governance and the growing use of quality control and evaluation measures. 'However this does not appear to have led to any marked convergence in structures and processes' (Green, 1999: 69) nor in the details of policy. Indeed, the different models underlying the operation of the various systems appeared to be as distinctive as they were a decade earlier. Rather than simply concentrating on the discourse of policy, he calls for more attention to be given to structural analysis to enable us to understand better the impact of common trends on particular settings.

As Bottery (2000) indicates, global trends in each nation are strongly mediated by factors such as:

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- its central values, for example its orientation towards an individualist or collective ethos
- its long political and social history as embodied in current educational structures
- the particular personalities holding power when reform is being attempted, their beliefs, objectives and political strength.

The combination of such factors may create a highly constrained situation for policy-makers so that often 'reforms focus on what can be done instead of on what might really make a difference' (Levin, 2000: 8).

The lack of attention to culture and context in existing models and theories is criticised by Dimmock and Walker (2000: 159) for being ethnocentric and assuming 'a false universalism'. This assessment leads them to develop a model for cross-cultural comparison in educational leadership and management, covering both system-level and school-level cultural characteristics, 'in order to present holistic and contextualised accounts' (ibid.: 159).

The present chapter seeks to avoid the assumption of a false universalism by presenting a set of models which can be used in different contexts:

- to analyse the governance of school education, as well as degrees of school autonomy and forms of accountability
- to consider the possible impact of proposed changes in this area.

The term 'school' is used throughout this chapter. However, the analysis presented is believed to be widely applicable across different types of educational institution, including those designed for older adolescents and adults, called 'colleges' in some countries. The emphasis may sometimes be different and reference is made to this later.

Governance

Studies of educational management and administration too often neglect the framework of governance within which school leaders operate. The notion of 'governance' itself is contested. Rhodes (1997) has identified six distinct uses of the term. A common contemporary approach is to speak of 'governing without government' to suggest that the task of governing has now outrun the capacity of governments to perform it. Consequently, it is increasingly undertaken by complex external networks of groupings from the private and voluntary sectors, professional 'experts', lay people and others. This leads to difficulties of 'steering' and monitoring and to 'opaque accountability' (Rhodes, 1999: xxiii). A characteristic definition of governance within this approach is as follows: 'a concern with . . . achieving collective action in the realm of public affairs in conditions where it is not possible to rest on recourse

to the authority of the state' (Stoker, 2000: 3). Jessop (2000) speaks of the state being forced to share power in order to secure its objectives. Dowling et al. (2000: 109) apply this thinking to local government: 'Governance implies interconnectedness and mutual dependency between a variety of organisations both inside and outside the local authority.'

Such writers adopt the classification of governing structures in terms of markets, networks and hierarchies (Rhodes, 1999; Thompson et al., 1991) but tend to equate 'governance' with networks alone. The related though highly ambiguous concept of 'partnership' attains considerable importance within the perspective (Raab, 2000). However, it is not clear why 'governance' should be conceived in such specific terms, even if, under the so-called New Public Management, government has increasingly adopted the roles of enabler, contractor and regulator (Arnott, 2000). Levin (2000) has drawn attention to the range of 'policy levers' which governments have at their command, including mandates, inducements, capacity-building, system changing and opinion mobilisation (see also Levin, 2001). Increasingly governments in many countries are employing a range of regulatory and monitoring devices such as audits, inspections, target-setting and performance measurement.

These forms of system management are more indirect than the traditional ones based on command and direction, but their overall impact in terms of the distribution of power is an open question, a matter for empirical investigation in each context. Has there been a dispersal of power, as the 'governing without government' approach would suggest, or has there simply been a shift from one form of control to another (Jacobs, 2000)? How successful are governments in 'steering at a distance', or in what Jessop (2000: 23) calls 'metagovernance': 'the process of managing the complexity, plurality and tangled hierarchies characteristic of prevailing modes of co-ordination'? For example, what have been the effects of governments privatising parts of public services and creating arm's length agencies in an attempt to cope with overload by cutting down on direct service provision? Hirst (2000) considers such structural changes have increased not reduced fragmentation and complexity through the requirements they create for enhanced supervision, regulation and co-ordination.

Pending further detailed investigations in different settings, it seems appropriate to adopt more open definitions of governance than Stoker's given above. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines the term simply as 'the act or manner of governing', which would embrace markets, networks and hierarchies and any mixes of them found in particular contexts. Hirst (2000) follows this approach but extends it to include the contemporary concern with results, defining governance as 'the means by which an activity or ensemble of activities is controlled or directed, such that it delivers an acceptable range of outcomes according to some established social standard' (ibid.: 24).

Martin et al. (2000: 121) refer to 'a system of rule which constitutes the form and process of the public sphere' which emphasises the formal rather

than the behavioural aspects of governance, though they add that it will 'not be neutral but driven by the values of the dominant institutional or political order'. As Rhodes (1997) argues, altruism between levels of government is rare. Governance must be conceived in political (including micropolitical) and not simply in legal or procedural terms. Also, although the idea of governing *without* government is questionable, the concept of governance clearly encompasses *more than* government.

The changing governance of school systems exhibits a series of tensions which will become evident in the analysis below. These include tensions between:

- integration and fragmentation
- competition and co-operation
- central and local decision-making.

The processes involved are delicate ones, and the balances struck at any point in time (for they will frequently change) will impact significantly on the character of the schooling made available.

Models of governance in school education

The argument presented here is that governance, provided that it is defined in an 'open' manner as suggested above, can be viewed as an overarching concept to establish a framework within which other common concepts relating to structure and process, such as autonomy and accountability, can be located. This should help to promote conceptual coherence and avoid partial and misleading assessments of these other ideas when considered outside their broader context.

Table 14.1 offers a tentative framework (developed from Glatter and Woods, 1995) for understanding and applying models of governance in school education. It is undoubtedly a crude and oversimplified analysis. Four models are distinguished: competitive market (CM), school empowerment (SE), local empowerment (LE) and quality control (QC). These models should be seen as ideal types. They are separated here for analytical purposes. In practice each governance system or jurisdiction is likely to operate on some composite of these models. Sometimes they may complement and reinforce each other as they impact on localities and schools but their interaction is also likely to cause tensions which participants must seek to resolve.

Competitive market

Examples of policies characteristic of each model are shown first, and then specific features of each of them are identified against a number of issues of

Table 14.1 *Models of governance in school education*

Models	Competitive market (CM)	School Empowerment (SE)	Local empowerment (LE)	Quality control (QC)
Indicative policies	Pupil number led funding e.g. by vouchers More open enrolment Published data on school performance Variety of school types	Authority devolved to school on finance, staffing, curriculum, student admissions Substantial powers for school council/governing body	Authority devolved to locality on finance, staffing, curriculum, student admissions Substantial powers for local community council/ governing body	Regular, systematic inspections Detailed performance targets Mandatory curriculum and assessment requirements
Main perspective(s)	Commercial	Political and/or managerial	Political and/or managerial	Bureaucratic
How the individual school is viewed	As a small business	As a participatory community	One of a 'family' of local schools	As a point of delivery/ local outlet
Main focus within the system	The relevant competitive arena	The individual school	The locality as a social and educational unit	Central or other state bodies
Nature of schools' autonomy	Substantial	Devolved	Consultative	Guided
Form of accountability	Contractual; consumerist	Responsive; 'dual'	Responsive; community forum	Contractual; hierarchical
Purpose of performance measurement	Inform consumer choice	Provide management information	Benchmarking across units	Monitor and develop system
Key school leadership role	Entrepreneur	Director and co-ordinator	Networker	Production manager
Function of intermediate authority	Minimal	Supportive, advisory	Strategic co-ordination	Production supervision as agent of controlling body

structure and process. Thus, the major perspective underlying the CM model relates to the analogy with the commercial marketplace. Under this model, the school is viewed as a small or medium-sized business with a high degree of autonomy and few formal links with the governmental structure. The main focus within the system is placed not on the individual school but on the relevant 'competitive arena' (Woods et al., 1998), which will contain a group of (generally) adjacent schools in competition with each other for pupils and funds. The nature of this arena will vary widely from context to context, depending on factors such as the socio-economic character of the area, including access to private transport, and the relative density of the population – where the population is very thinly spread, there may be no arena at all.

School empowerment

The next model is called 'school empowerment' (SE) because policy-makers often claim that they are seeking to empower school-level stakeholders, in particular the headteacher or principal and other staff as well as parents. The

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delegation of functions to school level has been 'legitimised by a discourse of empowerment' (Arnott, 2000: 70). The perspectives underlying this model might be either or both 'political' (in the broad sense of dispersing power) and managerial. In some national contexts the emphasis has been purely managerial, on the principle that decisions are best taken as close as possible to the point of action, while in others the argument has also been couched in terms of freedom and choice. Although the SE model is often in practice combined with CM, it is analytically distinct and the picture of the school which is implied in the model is different. The focus is more on the institution itself and the way it is run than on its competitive activities 'against' other institutions. It encompasses ideas of participation, identification and partnership – the school conceived of as an extended community and in this respect it seems to provide a contrast with the CM model. The unit within the system which provides its main focus or 'centre of gravity' is the school itself.

Local empowerment

Some countries have been more concerned with devolution to local and municipal authorities than to schools, and it seemed important to represent this model explicitly within the current version of the framework. Although the LE model shares the term 'empowerment' with SE, and there are a number of commonalities, there are also significant differences between them. As with SE, the justification for this form of empowerment can be in either or both political or managerial terms. However, the perception of the individual school is different. The school is here viewed more explicitly as one of a 'family' of schools, as part of a local educational *system* and as a member of a broader community in which there are reciprocal rights and obligations. The contrast with the CM model is particularly evident here. Martin et al. (2000) have developed a framework which 'contrasts a system of local education devolved according to the principles of community governance as against those of the market' (ibid.: 122): they compare 'consumer democracy' with 'local democracy'. Within the LE model, the main focus is on the locality as a social and educational unit and its representative bodies, though numerous difficulties have been found in practice with implementing representative local democracy satisfactorily.

Quality control

Finally, under the pressures of global competition and growing demands on public expenditure, governments are increasingly seeking control over the quality of key school processes and products even in highly devolved and/or market-like systems. The major underlying perspective in the QC model is likely to be bureaucratic, that is involving laid-down rules and requirements

and operating through set procedures, controls and monitoring arrangements. The picture of the school implied here is of a kind of 'point of delivery', with many of the 'goods' on offer and the targets established – the 'product mix' and 'product quality' – having been determined at either the central or state level, depending on the constitutional arrangements. Under the QC model, the units within the system which provide the main focus or 'centre of gravity' usually tend to be located within, or closely connected to, central or regional government.

The four models are by no means comprehensive and the framework could well be formulated differently, but it provides a useful instrument through which to examine some key issues of structure and process in the governance of school education.

School autonomy

The framework suggests differences in the nature of schools' autonomy under each of the four models. Before discussing these, some consideration of the idea of school autonomy is needed. The concept is connected with the trend to devolve power to lower levels in many countries. As Green (1999) points out, such devolution can take many different forms: 'Decentralisation has variously meant devolving power to the regions, the regional outposts of central government (deconcentration), the local authorities, the social partners and the institutions themselves' (ibid.: 61). He suggests that there are still clear differences between countries where most power lies at the centre (such as France and Japan), those where regional control is strongest (such as Germany and Switzerland), those where local control now predominates (the Nordic countries) and those where substantial power has been devolved to schools and the marketplace (Netherlands and the UK).

The term 'autonomy' is often used in a rhetorical sense and to guard against this it needs to be examined closely (Maden, 2000). Two key questions are: autonomy for whom and over what? Bullock and Thomas (1997) distinguish between the autonomy of the individual learner, the educator and the institution, arguing that the level of autonomy might be increased for one of these while at the same time being reduced for the others. The fact that autonomy is a relative concept is also seen when we consider the domains in which autonomy might be given to schools. Writing from an Australian perspective, Sharpe (1994) presents a 'self-management continuum' from total external control to total self-management, and attempts to identify movements along four sub-continua in Australia over a 20-year period. These are concerned with *input* variables, such as finance, staff and students, *structure* variables, such as decisions about the patterns of provision, *process* variables, such as the management of curriculum and *environment* variables, to do with reporting and marketing. His conclusion was that increased government control in some

areas had modified or even nullified the impact of enhanced self-management in others.

Bullock and Thomas (1997) examined decentralisation in 11 very diverse countries, including China, Poland, Uganda and the USA, along four dimensions: curriculum and assessment, human and physical resources, finance and access (pupil admissions). They found movements towards both more and less autonomy, and concluded that 'Taken as a whole, the impact of decentralisation – and centralisation – on the general principle of autonomy appears uncertain and problematic' (ibid.: 213). They also noted that in some countries, such as England and New Zealand, the 'paradox' of simultaneous centralisation and decentralisation was evident, the centralisation relating particularly to the curriculum and, to some extent, funding regimes, with governments tending to take greater powers to define educational priorities and schools having scope to decide how best to implement them. Simkins (1997) distinguishes between *criteria power*, concerned with determining purposes and frameworks, and *operational power*, concerned with service delivery. Karlsen (2000) also refers to such a distinction in his analysis of educational governance in Norway and British Columbia, Canada: 'We are looking at a decentralisation dynamic in which initiating is a central task, but in which implementation and accountability are local duties' (ibid.: 531).

Despite this paradox of 'decentralised centralism' (Karlsen, 2000: 529), substantial autonomy has been accorded to schools in England in recent years. Indeed, the government has claimed that 'No other education service in the world devolves as much power and responsibility to schools as we do' (DfEE, 2001: 16). It is therefore worth briefly noting some key research findings from this experience. The process has led to a much larger role for head-teachers (principals), particularly in relation to resources. The external pressure for enhanced performance and for the implementation of curricular changes has increased the scope and intensity of the work, and the head's role is now commonly exercised together with a group of senior staff including the deputy head (Levačić, 1998; Wallace and Hall, 1994). The autonomy of other teaching staff has arguably declined as a result of the advent of the National Curriculum and the impact of school-based budgeting on many teachers' employment position (Bullock and Thomas, 1997).

The evidence that devolution has had any impact on pupil learning is extremely thin, but this is due at least in part to the complexity of the processes involved and the inherent difficulty of investigating them. However, there is evidence that devolution has significantly enhanced the quality of schools' internal planning capacities and processes (Levačić, 1998). Enhancing school autonomy in some respects while extending central control in others, in the context of a limited 'market', has had another somewhat paradoxical effect. Schools have not on the whole tended to differentiate themselves in order to focus on a specific *niche*, but rather have sought to appeal to a broad

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grouping of parents and pupils. Nor have the structural arrangements tended to promote innovation at school level: instead schools have sought to emulate the dominant model of the high-status school (Woods et al., 1998). At the time of writing the government is seeking to introduce measures to deal with these issues (DfEE, 2001).

Key issues in any move towards devolution are the effectiveness of support systems, including development opportunities: 'Unless there is local capacity for management, there is no advantage to making decisions where action takes place. The Principle of Subsidiarity argues not just for moving decisions to the site of action, but also making local decision-makers competent' (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 66–7).

An OECD study of 14 national school systems (OECD, 1995) sought to distinguish three modes of decision-making: full autonomy; made after consultation with another authority at an adjoining level; made within guidelines set by another authority, generally at the top level. In Table 14.1 we have adapted this (admittedly crude) classification to our ideal-type framework of models of governance. In a 'pure' CM model the autonomy of schools would be very substantial. We have not used the term 'full autonomy' here since this is virtually unimaginable: there are always constraints, not least from the law, even for a highly unorthodox independent school (Sharpe, 1994). A key purpose of the SE model is to maximise schools' autonomy within an overall system, so here we have suggested that 'devolved' is the most appropriate descriptor. The LE model places emphasis on the school as a member of a co-operating family of institutions, so here we use 'consultative' from the OECD study's typology. In the QC model, however, the role of the senior authority at central or state level is more pronounced, so the appropriate form of autonomy here is 'guided', again based on the OECD typology.

Accountability

Writing about school-based management (SBM) in the USA, Wohlstetter and Sebring (2000) comment: 'An underlying premise of SBM is that school-level participants trade increased autonomy for increased accountability' (ibid.: 174). Accountability is a contested concept, not least, as an Australian writer suggests, 'because it is often the engine of policy: what is held to account is what counts' (Cotter, 2000: 12). It is also complex. There is not space here for a full discussion (see, for example, Adams and Kirst, 1999; Feintuck, 1994; Kogan, 1986; Scott, 1989). I will seek to relate different forms of accountability to the four models of governance.

An important distinction is that between *contractual* and *responsive* accountability (Halstead, 1994). Contractual accountability is concerned with the degree to which educators are fulfilling the expectations of particular audiences in terms of standards, outcomes and results. It is based on an

explicit or implicit contract with those audiences. It tends to be measurement driven, with the factors to be measured – whether educational, financial or other – selected by those audiences in line with their perceived preferences and requirements. Responsive accountability refers to decision-making by educators after a process of taking into account the interests and wishes of relevant 'stakeholders'. It is more concerned with process than outcomes, and with securing involvement and interaction to obtain decisions which meet a range of needs and preferences.

Such a distinction should not, of course, be drawn too sharply, but it indicates different emphases between conceptions of accountability. Thus in the CM model the provision of schooling is analogous to a commercial service and so the predominant form of accountability is contractual. In the SE model with its focus on the school as a participatory community the dimension of responsiveness is uppermost. In LE the broader local community is the pivotal unit, so responsiveness to stakeholders is even more pronounced here. Finally in the QC model the contractual form will be the significant one, with the 'contract' being specified by governments or their agents rather than by parents or 'consumers' as in CM. The method will tend to be drawn from the

> accounting model of accountability that has pre-specified categories and accounts in terms of discrete scales of measurement ... The accounting dimension is entrenched at government level and is much loved by ministers who want a simple way of demonstrating good news to the electorate. This will often drive the bureaucracy to organise the tests and deliver the numbers. (Cotter, 2000: 4, 12)

Two other aspects of accountability are relevant to the models. First, each of the models implies a different mode of accountability. In the case of CM the mode is consumerist (Halstead, 1994), with power in principle being placed in the hands of consumer-surrogates, in the form of parents or guardians, to decide whether to choose the school for their child or to keep them there. The position is more complex in the case of SE. Many formulations (for example, Halstead, 1994; Kogan, 1986) refer to professional accountability but in school empowerment models such as SBM professionals often have to share authority with school boards or councils which include parents and community members. These are often regarded as relatively weak bodies with unclear roles and the 'agenda' firmly set by the professionals particularly the principal and other senior staff (Levačić, 1995), but the SE model as such incorporates the possibility of a significant element of non-professional as well as professional participation. This may be especially relevant, for example, in 'colleges' for older students where employment interests may be represented on governing boards. Hence we characterise the mode of accountability in this model as 'dual'. Within LE we identify the accountability mode as 'community forum'. This indicates that the ultimate authority within this model will lie at

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a local level beyond the school, though there are many variations in respect of the size and socio-geographical nature of this unit and the extent to which it operates on collegial or directive principles. The possibility of 'network' or 'partnership' arrangements with their tendency to produce fragmentation and 'opaque accountability' (Rhodes, 1999: xiii), referred to earlier, arises here. The mode in QC will be hierarchical, in that accountability will be owed to the body with power to define and control quality, located generally at national or state level.

A final aspect of accountability to be considered in relation to the models concerns the purpose of performance measurement. Although, as indicated earlier, measuring performance will be more prominent in contractual than responsive versions of accountability, the rise of target-setting, performance management and the 'audit society' (Bottery, 2000; Power, 1997) has been a central feature of public service operations in many countries in recent years. However, the prime purpose of such measurement will vary depending on the model. Thus in CM the chief purpose will be to inform consumer choice. In SE performance measurement and analysis will be conducted in order to provide management information to facilitate organisational improvement. In the LE model a key purpose will be to provide comparative 'benchmarking' information across organisational units to promote local system enhancement. Under QC the main purpose will be to seek to monitor, control and develop the system as a whole.

School leadership

The governance models imply distinct and somewhat contrasting roles for school leadership. In CM, school leaders are expected to provide the kind of education the consumers – and in particular their surrogates, the parents/guardians – want. This means that 'the identification and stimulation of parent demand for the kind of education the organization can produce most efficiently, becomes a primary task of the manager' (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 47). This requires primarily an entrepreneurial style of leadership. In the SE model the school leader has to draw together the many different educational, managerial and financial threads in the work of the school, as well as to stimulate and if possible inspire the professionals to greater achievement. The evidence suggests that under devolved school management both the roles of chief executive and educational leader attain greater significance (Levačič, 1998). In addition, there is a testing external dimension: 'although headteachers have gained more autonomy, they also have to meet increasingly diverse demands from all sides and are often caught in conflict. Headteachers get headaches' (Hernes, 2000: 2). Thus both a directing and a co-ordinating style are required.

In the LE model, there is a key requirement for school leaders to become effective networkers, both to promote the school's interests within the local

system and to collaborate productively in a partnership mode with their peers. Under QC the school leader's role is more akin to that of a production manager, organising the school and its staff to deliver products or outcomes of the requisite quality.

Clearly this analysis is oversimplified. In practice school leaders will interpret and enact their role in a variety of ways depending on their individual personalities, the cultures of their schools and other factors. The analysis is intended to suggest that the governance context is an important and often neglected influence on school leadership. Generalisations are frequently made about the features associated with effective school leadership without taking into account the specific and diverse frameworks of policy and governance within which it is exercised. For example, as Cotter (2000) points out: 'The current exhortations to principals to be transformational do not sit easily beside narrow forms of accountability' (ibid.: 7–8). He argues that such forms, in which principals are expected to accept given categories without reflection, are more consonant with transactional forms of leadership, as in our analogy above with the role of production manager.

However, the position in practice is more complex still. School leaders generally face not a single model of governance but several. So elements of the CM model are combined with others from SE and QC for example. As Leithwood (2001) suggests, in the face of this 'policy eclecticism', school leaders 'can be excused for feeling that they are being pulled in many different directions simultaneously. They *are* being pulled in many different directions simultaneously' (ibid.: 228). From this a series of tensions and dilemmas (Glatter, 1996) arises for school leaders, for example the dilemmas that, within their school 'The principal is required to be both a member of the cast and the star' (Wildy and Louden, 2000: 180) and within the wider system they are expected both to collaborate and to compete. School leaders have the task of successfully managing these tensions and ambiguities – by, for instance, skilful buffering of the staff from external pressures that conflict with the school's goals without insulating them from legitimate influences for improvement (Goldring, 1997; Leithwood, 2001). It is perhaps the most important and difficult task faced by school leaders in many contexts today.

Function of intermediate authority

The key functions and roles of the intermediate authority (where such a level exists) differ significantly between the four models of governance. In a pure CM model its functions are minimal, covering perhaps the provision of information to parents and support for pupils with additional educational needs. In the SE model the intermediate authority's role will be primarily supportive and advisory. Under LE much will depend on whether the geographical scope of its responsibility fits with the 'local system of schooling' concept underly-

ing the model. In some contexts it does: in others 'cluster' arrangements have been developed (for example, the Education Action Zones in England [DfEE, 1999]) based on areas which are smaller and more 'local' than those covered by the relevant intermediate authorities. (By their size intermediate authorities in some countries, for example the municipalities in Sweden and many school districts in the USA, come closer than their counterparts in other countries to a model of 'community governance'.) For simplicity we have disregarded this important distinction in Table 14.1 and suggested that in the LE model the intermediate authority's key function is strategic co-ordination. By contrast, in QC the authority becomes more of a production supervisor as an agent of the central controlling body. The reality of 'policy eclecticism' in many national contexts sets up major tensions and dilemmas for intermediate authorities just as it does for schools and their leaders.

Conclusion

Structures of governance vary widely between different national contexts. Also, as a result of the high level of 'reform' activity in many countries, these structures are often in considerable flux. Practitioners need to analyse their own contemporary settings closely and take this analysis into account in developing their approach to the management of external relations. It is hoped that this chapter will have helped in this challenging process.

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